

[National Defense Magazine](#) reported that the Department of Homeland Security has already taken steps to improve the suspension and debarment of government contractors for poor performance after testifying before the House Oversight Committee on March 18, 2010.

[From National Defense:](#)

A senior Homeland Security official has promised more accountability after revelations that the department in its first years rarely ever suspended or debarred contractors for poor performance.

Elaine C. Duke, undersecretary for management at DHS, said the department has taken steps to hold contractors accountable.

"We have taken actions to improve our policies and procedures and will continue to look for ways to strengthen our contracting program," she told the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform...

Duke said since 2007, DHS has initiated punitive actions against more than 240 contractors or individuals after it strengthened its procedures.

The department has set up a new performance review system and trained 3,000 of its personnel on its use. It has ordered them to enter the identities of contractors who performed poorly and whose contracts were terminated into federal databases so all federal agencies are aware of their records, she said.

On Thursday March 18, 2010, [Chairman Edolphus Towns held a hearing titled](#) : "Rewarding Bad Actors: Why do Poor Performing Contractors Continue to Get Government Business?" In a [letter to](#)

[Secretary of Defense Robert Gates](#)

on March 3, 2010, Chairman Towns questioned DOD's decision to award lucrative contracts to

Kellog Brown and Root despite past poor performance in Iraq, including endangering the lives of United States troops.